



# Leadership Handbook

July 2002

*"The evidence of leadership  
is  
performance"*

Team Leader  
Tom Baumgardner

Team Members  
Bob Bell  
Steve Harned  
Tom Kriehn  
Bernie Palmer  
Bob Thompson  
Al Wheeler

Regional Team Member  
Dean Gulezian, Director, NWS Eastern Region

Rosemary Auld Miller  
Chief Editor

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## Part I: Understanding Leadership

1. Leadership and the NWS Vision 2005.....	1
2. Leadership: What is it? .....	1
3. <i>Successful</i> Leadership.....	2
4. Leadership and the NWS Core Values.....	3
5. Strategy for Success.....	5
6. Leadership Secrets.....	5

## Part II: What You as a Leader Can Do Now

1. Positive personal traits, characteristics, and skills.....	7
2. Positive personal actions by the leader .....	8
3. Positive personal actions with the staff.... ..	10
4. Positive personal actions for the organization.....	13
5. Positive personal actions to support customers.....	16
References .....	18
<b>Appendix A</b> .....	A1
<b>Appendix B</b> .....	B1

## Part I: Understanding Leadership

### 1. Leadership and the NWS Vision 2005

The National Weather Service (NWS) is one of a small number of *High Impact* Agencies in the Executive Branch of the U.S. Government. As such, we have a special mandate to strive for new standards of excellence in customer service and mission performance. In concert with the strategic plans of the Department of Commerce and the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), the National Weather Service has produced a "road map" to serve America with distinction: *Vision 2005: The National Weather Service Strategic Plan for Weather, Water, Climate Services 2000-2005* (1999). This "Agenda for Action" details five strategic goals to achieve success and to accomplish our mission:

- 1.0 Deliver Better Products and Services
- 2.0 Capitalize on Scientific and Technological Advances
- 3.0 Exercise Global Leadership
- 4.0 Change the NWS Organizational Culture
- 5.0 Manage NWS Resources

How do we accomplish all of this? Just how *do* we demonstrate success in achieving "new standards of customer service and improved mission performance"?

"This strategic plan, through the goals, **objectives**, and **performance measures**, lays out the path we will take to accomplish our mission, achieve the focus and vision, and integrate our core values throughout the NWS."

In other words, the best way to demonstrate our success is through setting specific **objectives** and **measuring our performance**, and this is precisely the aim of the Strategic Plan.

This handbook was created to provide National Weather Service managers with an interesting and useful reference that may be picked up at any time. Your leadership is called upon in many ways every day. Hopefully this handbook can serve to remind you of just what is possible with your most successful leadership skills in practice every day.

### 2. Leadership: what is it?

According to The Merriam Webster Dictionary (1974), a person who exhibits leadership is one "who has commanding authority or influence." Yet if you were to ask a lot of successful and prominent people their own definition of such a person, rather than a spectrum of brief but varied definitions, you would most likely receive a great deal of philosophical wit-and-wisdom that was hard-earned over the years. Consider the following definition of successful leadership from former Governor of Texas and current

United States Senator, Ann Richards:

**"The evidence of leadership is performance. You have to be able to point to serious, consequential accomplishments."**

Performance. Accomplishments. Of all the definitions you may have heard or read over the years, these two *outcomes* of effective leadership better define the essence of the word than any other words in the dictionary.

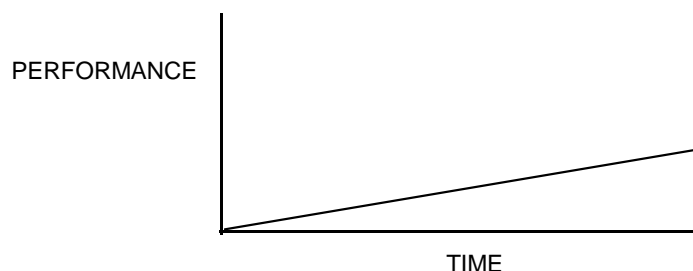
It is a very bottom-line definition. Leadership promotes performance, and performance yields accomplishment.

### 3. Successful Leadership

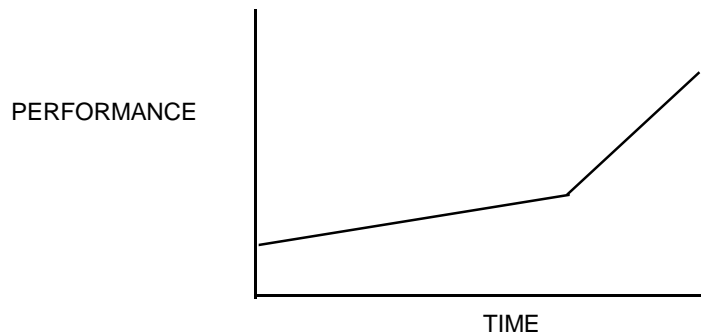
What does it mean to successfully lead your forecast office?

When all is said and done, your position as MIC or HIC, and thus as leader of this entity that produces such vital forecast products and services, is a temporary one. Eventually you will move on. During your tenure as leader you will enjoy the opportunity and obligation to truly make a difference. To leave behind important accomplishments while serving the public, is carrying out the mission of the National Weather Service.

Consider the following illustration. Assume the line on the graph indicates the course a Weather Service office has followed in the past:



Does this illustrate a case of successful leadership?  
Now consider the next illustration:



In this case, the course the office had been following was altered significantly. Many people would consider the increased performance level shown in the first illustration an example of good management, while the significant improvement in performance illustrated in the second graph is an example of successful leadership.

## 4. Leadership and the NWS Core Values

### a. Another Perspective

Dr. Thomas R. Bennett II (T. Bennett, personal communication, 2001) is a consultant on leadership and organizational change to the Defense Threat Reduction Agency and Headquarters, United States Army Reserve Command. He believes that the core of leadership is authenticity. People will not follow you until they “know who you are.” He lists three questions that all leaders must answer and communicate to their staff if they expect people to follow their lead:

1. Who am I?
2. Where am I going?
3. Why am I going there?

Interestingly, these three questions can be linked directly to the National Weather Service Core Values, Vision Statement, and Mission.

### b. Relation to NWS Core Values

“Who am I?” is a question that invokes one’s core values and innate traits, such as trustworthiness, integrity, compassion, fairness, etc. They are demonstrated and communicated to your staff both verbally and non-verbally through your actions. The positive characteristics of a good leader will be evident through those actions you take.

Some of these characteristics include accountability, competency, decisiveness, perseverance, to name a few.

Compare your core values to those established as the Core Values of the National Weather Service:

- **Service above self**
- **Our customers and partners**
- **Respect and trust of others and the diversity of our agency**
- **The open exchange of information and ideas**
- **Commitment to integrity, teamwork, self improvement**
- **High standards, and the scientific approach to our mission**
- **Innovative and empowered workforce**

Honestly embracing and demonstrating these NWS Core Values can only enhance the success of your leadership in and out of the office.

#### c. Vision

Dr. Bennett's second question, "Where am I going?" can be found in the NWS Vision Statement:

A world-class team of professionals who:

- **Produce and deliver quality forecasts you can trust when you need them most**
- **Use cutting edge technologies**
- **Provide services in a cost effective manner**
- **Strive to eliminate weather-related fatalities and improve the economic value of weather information**

When most employees joined the NWS, they probably had their own vision of where the NWS was going. Many joined simply because they liked "weather." Once on board, they became members of a team led by the local office MIC or HIC.

The focus of the office team is strengthened by the office leader. The office leader must communicate the NWS Vision to the team. This must be communicated with conviction. Jack Welch (T. Bennett, personal communication, 2001), former CEO of General Electric once said, "Any company trying to compete...must figure a way to engage the mind of every employee." If the NWS is going to survive in the long term, it must be led by strong leaders that communicate the Vision well and inspire their staff to excel.

#### d. Mission

“Why am I going there?” is Dr. Bennett’s third question. It is really at the heart of the NWS Mission Statement:

**The NWS provides weather, hydrologic, and climatic forecasts and warnings for the United States, its territories, and adjacent waters and ocean areas, for the protection of life and property, and the enhancement of the national economy. NWS data and products form a national information database and infrastructure which can be used by other government agencies, and the private sector, the public, and the global community.**

Of the three questions that Dr. Bennett puts forward, "where am I going?" is far and away the easiest to answer. The most successful leaders ensure the NWS Mission is communicated to their staff and that it is the basis on which all decisions are made. Finally, and importantly, the successful leaders ensure their staff stays focused on the mission.

Success on the national level is a reflection of the successes achieved at the local level.

## **5. Strategy for Success**

The NWS Mission is a constant. The strategy that determines **how** to achieve success in fulfilling the mission should be flexible, changing and evolving to meet the changing political and economic times. For us, then, those leaders who are best able to articulate the importance of the NWS Strategic Plan will be most able to successfully effect and embrace it.

Jack Welch (T. Bennett, personal communication, 2001) recently stated that he thought “Five-Year” plans were a waste of time. This was not an indictment of the strategic planning, rather a statement that change was occurring so quickly it is very difficult to envision what the world will be like in 5 to 10 years. On September 11, 2001, the world changed in an instant of time. And could anyone have forecast the sheer magnitude of the truly profound impact that the internet has made on world commerce and communications? For a company to be successful, Welch adds, it will simply have to be able to change at the “turn of a dime.” The ability to adapt quickly to changing times will be a hallmark of a successful office.

## **6. Leadership Secrets**

### **a. Colin Powell**

Oren Harari (Harari, 2002) has written a book about the seven leadership secrets of



Secretary of State Colin Powell. These insights, learned during his time in the military, are of immense practical value for anyone faced with important decisions, whether business or personal.

❶ Dare to be the Skunk: Every organization should tolerate rebels who “tell the emperor he has no clothes”. Of course, one cannot be rude or mean. A good leader works patiently and builds a consensus, prodding people while simultaneously listening, learning, and involving them. But in the final analysis, being responsible may mean making some people very angry.

❷ To get the Real Dirt, Head for the Trenches: The people in the field are closest to the problem. Therefore, that is where the real wisdom is. Let the staff argue with you. They may know more about the subject than you do. It sends the message that you want to hear what they really are thinking. If you ask for straight talk, you must be able to accept information and diverse opinions - even ideas that you don't want to hear. “The day that soldiers stop bringing you their problems”, Powell says, “is the day that you have stopped leading them.”

❸ Share the Power: Plans don't accomplish the work, it is people who get things done. Believe in two general principles: 1) People are competent; and 2) every job is important. This needs to be conveyed to all levels and to every last person in the organization. The flip side to this form of leadership is more responsibility on the part of those being led.

❹ Know When to Ignore Your Advisers: Experts, advisers, and consultants will only get you so far. Eventually, a leader must make the final decisions. The best leaders should never ignore their own hard-won experience.

❺ Develop Selective Amnesia: Too many leaders get so trapped in a fixed way of seeing things that they can't cope when the world changes. Powell says, “Never let ego get so close to your position, that when your position goes, ego goes with it.”

❻ Come Up for Air: Powell demands excellence from his staff, but also demands that they have lives outside the office. “I don't have to prove to anybody that I can work sixteen hours a day, if I can get it done in eight.”

❼ Declare Victory and Quit. Command is lonely, and so is the decision to withdraw from the position of authority - a choice not every leader makes soon enough. Leadership is not rank, privileges, titles, or money. It is responsibility.

And...

#### b. Norman Schwarzkopf

Strategy and character are the primary players here:

"Leadership is a potent combination of strategy and character. If you must be without one, be without strategy."

“The truth of the matter is that you always know the right thing to do. The hard part is doing it.” (T. Bennett, personal communication, 2001)

## **PART II: What You as a Leader Can Do Now**

Given all that you now know about **successful leadership**, your biggest challenge is, and will remain: What can you **do** with this wealth of wisdom? What can you do **now** to effect **positive** change that directly benefits your vital role in fulfilling the NWS mission?

Consider these **positive** personal traits and characteristics, which can become positive skills and action :

### **POSITIVE CHARACTERISTICS CAN BECOME...**

Caring	Accountable
Compassionate	Aware
Empathic	Competent
Enthusiastic	Confident
Fair	Consistent
Integrity	Courageous
Nurturing	Decisive
Passionate	Effective
Respectful	Flexible
Responsible	Honest with self
Sincere	Influential
Trusting	Innovative
Trustworthy	Knowledgeable
	Open minded
	Perseverant

### **POSITIVE SKILLS and ACTION**

Team builder  
Responsive  
Risk taking  
Supportive  
Visionary  
Learner  
Motivator  
Mentor  
Coach  
Communicator  
Consensus  
Builder  
Counselor  
Delegator  
Facilitator  
Mentor  
Good listener  
Learner  
Motivator

## **Positive PERSONAL actions you can take NOW**



**PERSONALLY EMBRACE CHANGE**



**COMMUNICATE THE VISION**



**HAVE THE COURAGE OF YOUR CONVICTIONS**



**LEAD BY EXAMPLE**



**PRACTICE “ACTIVE” LISTENING**



**DEMONSTRATE CONFIDENCE IN YOUR STAFF**



**EMBRACE DIVERSITY - CREATE AN INCLUSIVE ATMOSPHERE**



**TAKE TIME FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION AND GROWTH**



**STAY FOCUSED ON YOUR GOALS AND THE VISION**



# Positive PERSONAL actions you can take NOW

## **PERSONALLY EMBRACE CHANGE**

The chances of your staff accepting and embracing change is directly related to your attitude toward the change. View change as new opportunities to improve customer service.

## **COMMUNICATE THE VISION**

Have a compelling vision of where you want your office to go in the future. Articulate a clear vision and strategy. Make sure people know what is important to the organization. Transform vision into reality.

## **HAVE THE COURAGE OF YOUR CONVICTIONS**

Followers look to a leader to be confident. Understand the situation, make your decisions or plans, and then carry forward with confidence to involve your staff in the new direction. Share your convictions with your staff.

## **WALK THE WALK or LEAD BY EXAMPLE**

Successful people often imitate other successful people. As an MIC/HIC, your actions define success. They also communicate what you expect from your staff. Your staff will not accept a double standard. The old adage “Do as I say, not as I do” is not the motto of a successful leader. The successful leader will set a pattern for their staff to follow.

## **PRACTICE “ACTIVE” LISTENING**

Successful leaders are very good listeners. Remember to devote your total concentration when listening. Don't interrupt. Read between the lines. Watch body language. Understand personality types. Avoid getting defensive or hostile when disagreements arise. Listening enables your staff, your users, and your partners to contribute their ideas and opinions. They will be confident that you consider their input to be worthwhile.

## **DEMONSTRATE CONFIDENCE IN YOUR STAFF**

Have confidence in their abilities to see a project through to a successful conclusion. Excessive concern about the details may be construed as micro-management.

## **EMBRACE DIVERSITY - CREATE AN INCLUSIVE ATMOSPHERE**

Value and respect all members of your staff. Involve the entire staff in setting office goals for customer service, and in planning ways to meet requests of customers.

## **TAKE TIME FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION AND GROWTH**

You will not be able to effectively lead others unless you take the time to build your personal resources and grow your own capabilities to improve. Recognize that not only does your staff have lives outside the office, but that you need to do the same. Study information on dynamic leaders that you admire, or from the writings of a leader who has skills you would like to develop.

## **STAY FOCUSED ON THE GOALS AND VISON**

Avoid getting bogged down in details. As the office leader, you must ensure success through keeping in mind the larger picture.

## **Positive actions involving your STAFF you can take NOW**

- ☐ **EMPOWER THE STAFF BY INVOLVING THEM IN DECISION-MAKING**
- ☐ **SHARE INFORMATION REGULARLY**
- ☐ **RECOGNIZE ACCOMPLISHMENTS**
- ☐ **HOLD FREQUENT STAFF MEETINGS**
- ☐ **REGULARLY PROVIDE PERFORMANCE FEEDBACK**
- ☐ **ENCOURAGE CAREER DEVELOPMENT**
- ☐ **FOSTER LEADERSHIP SKILLS IN STAFF**
- ☐ **DEVELOP AN ENVIRONMENT OF TEACHING AND LEARNING**
- ☐ **CHALLENGE YOUR STAFF**



# **Positive actions involving your STAFF you can take NOW**

## **EMPOWER STAFF BY INVOLVING THEM IN DECISION-MAKING**

It only makes sense to involve them in the decision-making process when addressing operational issues. Include them in all steps from goal setting through the determination of specific steps to take. Often one or two individuals with strong personalities tend to dominate discussions. If you find this happening, gently cut off the controllers by saying, "Before you give us your insights into that issue, let's hear from...". When a group that you have empowered has come up with a proposal or idea that might not be exactly what you want, accept it and let them either learn from their mistakes or prove to you that they were right.

## **SHARE INFORMATION REGULARLY**

Be as open as possible in sharing information with your staff. Information is power, and when you share information, you also share power. Sharing information builds trust. This is also a good way to slow down the rumor mill. Rumors often develop when there is an information void.

## **RECOGNIZE ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

Use positive reinforcement that is personal, immediate, specific, sincere and consistent to recognize accomplishments. Examples include personally giving a handshake and sincere thanks, cash awards, time off awards, unique/unofficial certificates of recognition tailored for the group or individual; giving someone your full attention instead of listening with "one ear"; giving something symbolic of the NWS's history; having a picnic or cook out day at the office to celebrate a team accomplishment; writing a handwritten note acknowledging a special effort; and having a supply of small items for instant recognition for On The Spot awards (pins, pens, etc.).

## **HOLD FREQUENT STAFF MEETINGS**

Hold meetings every 1 to 2 months at a minimum. Share information. Listen and learn.

## **REGULARLY PROVIDE FEEDBACK**

Feedback is vital to the staff and to you personally. Create a "Metrics" bulletin board and post performance scores. At each staff meeting, discuss office goals and progress made toward reaching those goals. On a personal level, make opportunities to discuss performance with each staff member as often as possible. People should never be surprised at their mid term or final GWPAS meeting. Provide monthly QC reports to the staff. After major events, evaluate the staff's performance and provide a written "post mortem".

## **ENCOURAGE CAREER DEVELOPMENT**

Leadership is allowing people to discover talents and abilities that they hadn't developed until the leader framed the challenge, provided the opportunity, and led the way. A leader inspires others to contribute their best. Encourage employees to take responsibility for their

career planning and development. Steps for successful planning are contained in the DOC Individual Development Plan guidelines, and include assessing current career issues, knowledge of work environment, knowledge of self, integration of knowledge of self and work environment, goal development, and methods for taking action. Determine together what training may be needed. Search out training opportunities. Encourage the staff to seek training. Provide opportunities for them to exercise the training on their return. Distribute the training fairly and impartially. Wherever possible, make training a positive opportunity and not a corrective action for deficiencies.

### **FOSTER LEADERSHIP SKILLS IN STAFF**

You cannot be in the office twenty four hours a day, and you will not always be the manager of that particular unit. For those reasons alone (although many more could be cited) you need to develop leadership skills in your staff. A successful leader knows his/her limitations and realizes they cannot do everything alone. Skill building can improve team performance, encourage initiative, and help with problem resolutions. It has been said that the most successful leader will have people that he/she has mentored in many other offices within the organization, expanding their influence on the agency.

### **DEVELOP AN ENVIRONMENT OF TEACHING AND LEARNING**

A leader must: be both a teacher and a student, teach and learn from people, share values, intervene when there is something to be learned, be knowledgeable, and do their homework on an issue. A person can't be an effective teacher if they are not knowledgeable. Knowledge transfer is key to change. To be a good teacher a leader must be also be a good learner and pass on what is learned through teaching. A leader does not "know it all". A leader develops a teaching organization where everyone is looking for opportunities to learn from others. A teaching organization not only enhances learning today, but ensures the development of the leaders for tomorrow. A leader is a good story teller who reflects on experiences, learns from them, and shares experiences so others may learn from them.

### **CHALLENGE YOUR STAFF**

Coach people. Build teams and motivate people. Treat people as professionals and they will respond as professionals. Provide insight by asking the right questions. Do not put limits on talented people. Encourage creativity.

## **Leadership Actions for the Organization**

-  **ENSURE THAT YOU PERSONALLY UNDERSTAND THE ORGANIZATIONAL BIG PICTURE AND VISION**
-  **VIEW CHANGE AS OPPORTUNITY**
-  **ENSURE STAFF UNDERSTANDS REASONS FOR CHANGE AND EMPHASIZE THE POSITIVE**
-  **'GROW' THE VISION IN THE STAFF OVER TIME**
-  **LEARN TO HANDLE ADAPTIVE CHANGE**
-  **MOVE EXCELLENT IDEAS UP THE LADDER**
-  **REVIEW STATION OPERATIONS PLAN REGULARLY**
-  **PRESENT AWARDS IN CONTEXT OF THE BIG PICTURE AND THE NWS VISION**
-  **KNOW THE ORGANIZATIONAL RULES**



# Leadership Actions for the Organization

## **ENSURE THAT YOU PERSONALLY UNDERSTAND THE ORGANIZATIONAL BIG PICTURE AND THE NWS VISION**

Ask questions about higher level activities and meetings during your appraisal or other discussions with the RD/Deputy RD. Try to understand the purpose behind these as related to the NWS vision.

## **VIEW CHANGE AS OPPORTUNITY**

The NWS and the world are changing quickly. Embracing change is one of cornerstones of success. We must use change as an opportunity to improve the way we do business and to improve our products and services. Acknowledge and reward first followers. As Will Rogers once said, "When you're through changing, you're through".

## **ENSURE STAFF UNDERSTAND THE REASONS FOR THE CHANGE AND EMPHASIZE THE POSITIVE**

Make sure your staff understands why the NWS is making specific changes. Key on the positive aspects of the specific changes.

## **GROW THE VISION IN THE STAFF OVER TIME**

An organizational "Vision" is somewhat of an abstract concept to many employees. Without an understanding of the vision of an organization, employees may have trouble understanding the need for changes in operations. Any organizational change must be tied to the vision. The MIC/HIC needs to tie the agency's vision to discussions of any new or changing operational procedures.

## **LEARN TO HANDLE AN ADAPTIVE CHALLENGE OR CHANGE EFFECTIVELY**

Give top priority to the issues you say are most important. Working in a large organization, tasks can be mandated from higher levels with which you may not totally agree. The disagreement could arise from the purpose, implementation, support, resource impact, etc., of the tasking. It's possible that some higher level policies and decision are bad, and not in the best interest of the NWS or its customers. When you or your staff detect such flaws, don't be afraid to pass this up the line, but with sound justification. You do have a responsibility to ensure that those tasking you are fully aware of your concerns and to offer alternative approaches. However, once the decision to proceed is made, you must carry it out. As leaders in the organization, you must develop the best method to support and to effectively implement the task at hand. Respond to the adaptive change (change over which we have no control) by finding a way to deal with the change, rather than throwing up hands and saying it's out of our control. Seek alternatives. There are many ways to deal with an issue.

### **MOVE AN EXCELLENT IDEA UP THE LADDER**

A WFO/RFC may need to make operational changes or have excellent ideas for improvements, but the need is not seen at the Regional Office or National Headquarters level. The MIC/HIC must champion a good idea and lobby aggressively to effect needed changes. This would involve building an excellent case and working to convince others at the Regional or National Headquarters levels.

### **REVIEW STATION OPERATIONS PLAN REGULARLY**

Assess the progress toward the milestones, and determine if the goals are still consistent with the Strategic Vision.

### **PRESENT AWARDS IN CONTEXT OF THE BIG PICTURE AND THE NWS VISION**

Whenever presenting awards to employees, relate them to the work being recognized. For example, "This AWIPS application developed by our local team could not have been completed without using cutting edge techniques", or, "Our conversion to an all FTS phone system will result in a substantial cost savings to the government."

### **KNOW THE ORGANIZATIONAL RULES**

Read those summaries and white papers from headquarters and other policy material. At least scan or review them and try to grasp the essence of the material. Do this even though they seem to have little direct impact at the field office level. Be very familiar with the Collective Bargaining Agreement.

## **Leadership Actions to Support the Customer**



**UNDERSTAND THE BIG PICTURE LOCALLY**



**PROMOTE GOOD PUBLIC RELATIONS**



**STAY INFORMED OF LOCAL AND STATE  
GOVERNMENT NEWS AND EDITORIALS**



**SET UP USER ADVISORY GROUPS COMPRISED  
OF IMPORTANT CUSTOMERS IN YOUR AREA**



**SEND STAFF TO CUSTOMER/PARTNER FORUMS**



**INVITE CUSTOMERS/PARTNERS TO ADDRESS  
STAFF**



**CONSIDER A JOINT PROJECT WITH THE MEDIA**



**BECOME ACTIVE IN THE LOCAL FEDERAL  
EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**



# Leadership Actions for the Organization

## **UNDERSTAND THE BIG PICTURE LOCALLY**

You need to stay in touch with events / developments in your area so that you can plan operations to meet local customer needs or satisfy concerns. If you are aware of what is important to your customers, you can structure your operations to meet those needs.

## **PROMOTE GOOD PUBLIC RELATIONS**

Cultivating positive relations with the media will usually translate into a highlight of your operations when you do a good job, but also help minimize the damage when you do poorly. If you maintain an ongoing and positive relationship with the media, they will usually be forgiving of, or at least not focus on, a poor operational performance. That is true of other user groups as well. If you sincerely try to get to know your customers and respond to their needs, they will be tolerant of the limitations and constraints over which you have no control.

## **STAY INFORMED OF LOCAL AND STATE GOVERNMENT NEWS AND EDITORIALS**

Do these issues relate to or have possible impacts on the NWS mission? Do they provide you with a better understanding and context of your customers' and users' needs?

## **SET UP USER ADVISORY GROUPS COMPRISED OF IMPORTANT CUSTOMERS IN YOUR AREA**

Explore better ways of meeting their needs through your NWS products and services. Such groups can advise on a periodic basis on some component of products and services that we provide, or could be created to deal with a specific issue or problem. Advisory groups could consist of a collection of customers and partners, or perhaps just one or two key partners in primarily an NWS team. For example, a team consisting of several office people and a non-NWS SKYWARN coordinator.

## **SEND STAFF TO CUSTOMER/PARTNER FORUMS**

The greater the exposure of our staff to customers and partners and their needs, the better our staffs understand customer needs. It also helps the customer relate more comfortably with our staff as a whole, and not just a few selected individuals.

## **INVITE CUSTOMERS/PARTNERS TO ADDRESS STAFF**

Bring customers/partners to talk with the office as a group, such as an FAA representative, media people, emergency managers, etc.

## **CONSIDER A JOINT PROJECT WITH THE MEDIA**

Examples would include TV presentations, town meetings, or cooperative efforts during severe weather awareness campaigns.

## **BECOME ACTIVE IN THE LOCAL FEDERAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

Volunteer to share the NWS mission with your peers through office tours or through presentations at the Council meetings.

## REFERENCES

Harari, O., 2002: Behind Open Doors. *Modern Maturity*, McGraw-Hill.

Woolf, Henry B., ed. (1974) *Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary*. G. & C. Merriam Co., Springfield, Connecticut, 1535 pp.

National Weather Service, 1999: *Vision 2005 National Weather Service Strategic Plan for Weather, Water, and Climate Services 2000-2005*. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, U. S. Department of Commerce, 24 pp.

## **Appendix A**

### **Additional Positive Personal Actions You Can Take Now**

#### **MAKE DECISIONS IN A TIMELY MANNER**

Don't wait until you have every possible piece of information before making a decision. Make a decision when you have enough information to make an informed, intelligent decision. Don't push difficult decisions up to the next level.

#### **GET REGULAR BRIEFINGS FROM THE MANAGEMENT TEAM**

Keep informed on operational and logistical issues. Teach them to provide summaries which are informative overviews emphasizing bottom line impact. If you need additional detail on a given issue, you can always explore further.

#### **ADMIT MISTAKES**

Sometimes even the best thought out plans do not work. If this is the case with a new or adjusted operational change instituted by you, confirm that it does not work and determine how to change it for the better. Admit your mistake to your staff and solicit their input while developing a solution. Do not hold on to ineffective procedures. Don't let your ego become identified with a bad decision. Accept the mistake, learn from it, and change for the better. When leaders admit mistakes they show that they are only human. This helps establish trust and gets people on board. Admitting a mistake can also be a good way to start a discussion about a mistake that someone else has made. If leaders do not admit mistakes, they communicate that they are perfect and do not need anyone's help. People need to see their leader own up to his or her mistakes, or they will not follow the leader.

#### **TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR YOUR ACTIONS AND DECISIONS**

Be accountable for your own actions in addition to those your staff. If you are not sure that you can accomplish an action, make it clear that you will check it out and get back to your staff, but never promise what you cannot deliver.

#### **BUILD TRUST THROUGH HONESTY**

Honesty builds trust. As Warren Bennis states, "Trust is the emotional glue that binds leaders and followers together."

#### **BE ACCESSIBLE**

Make sure your users can reach you when they need to. Let them know who to contact when you are out of the office.

#### **DEMONSTRATE THAT YOU ARE TRUSTWORTHY**

Trust is vital to a good leader's success. Trust is a two way street. You need to demonstrate through your actions that you may be trusted by the people that you lead, and also that your leaders may trust you.

## **BE A GOOD COMMUNICATOR**

Good communication is essential to running a successful Weather office. According to former President Gerald Ford, “nothing in life is more important than the ability to communicate effectively.”

## **DEVELOP GOOD 'PEOPLE SKILLS'**

Be a good people manager. Developing good “people skills” is essential to being a successful leader. Teddy Roosevelt said, “The most important single ingredient to the formula of success is knowing how to get along with people.” Treat everyone with respect. Strive to be respected, not liked. Treat all people fairly, not equally. Give credit where credit is due. Make sure your staff gets the recognition they deserve at the Regional level and higher. Look for win-win outcomes when faced with difficult challenges. Look for ways that the efforts of your office will help the customer to better do their job or for them to receive recognition.

## **BE DECISIVE AND HAVE COURAGE IN YOUR CONVICTIONS**

An effective leader must be decisive and practice ethical decision making. Being decisive doesn't mean making quick decisions. Decisions should be well thought out. Leaders will consider the consequences of their decisions at the organizational, office, and personal level before making them.

## **FOLLOW THROUGH ON PROMISED ACTIONS**

Earn respect through action and see that your office follows through on their commitments as well.

## **USE POWER WISELY**

Leadership is really a selfless use of power. Power in this sense is the capacity and competency to influence people and outcomes to bring about change. Be giving of yourself. Power is sharing information with your associates and considering your associates as assets. A leader uses power to enable, empower, and enliven people to commit, excel, and achieve worthwhile goals. Share power in a participatory way.

## **CONSULT WITH YOUR MANAGEMENT IN DECISION-MAKING**

Don't operate in a void. Whenever possible, consult with your management team before making decisions.

## **THINK "CONCISE"**

Write short, succinct memos. Keep editing until your message is down to one page or less.

## **Appendix B**

### **Additional Positive actions involving your STAFF you can take NOW**

#### **HIRE THE BEST PEOPLE - "POWELL'S RULES FOR PICKING PEOPLE"**

Look for intelligence and judgement and, most critically, a capacity to anticipate. Also look for loyalty, integrity, a high-energy drive, a balanced ego, and the drive to get things done. How often do our recruitment and hiring processes tap into these attributes? Organization doesn't really accomplish anything. Plans don't accomplish anything, either. Theories of management don't matter much. Endeavors succeed or fail because of the people involved. Only by attracting the best people will you accomplish great deeds. - Excerpts from Some Refreshing Perspectives on Leadership by General Colin Powell (no copyright).

#### **DON'T HAVE PRECONCEPTIONS ABOUT NEW EMPLOYEES**

Begin the relationship positively, and treat them with high expectations and an attitude of trust.

#### **EARN COMMITMENT OF FOLLOWERS**

Build responsible relationships by communicating authentic presence through words, actions, and values. Be accountable for your own actions. Demonstrate good character because it becomes your destiny. Treat others with uncompromising truth. Show loyalty and commitment to the organization.

#### **USE POWER PROPERLY**

As MIC/HIC, you have the authority to direct actions to be taken. However, to ensure that you make the best decision possible, use your authority to encourage staff input in the decision making process. Obtaining employee "buy-in" will ensure that good input is available for the decision to be made and that the decision will more likely be embraced by the staff since they will have provided input. You still make the decision but this will ensure that you have all the needed input to make the best decision.

#### **UNDERSTAND DIFFERENCES IN PEOPLE AND EMBRACE DIVERSITY**

A leader will recognize the valuable qualities and experiences that come from each of their people, and find the best and most productive ways to use those differences, experiences, and interests.

#### **BREAK DOWN ORGANIZATIONAL BARRIERS**

Any organization has inertia. This is especially true of given subdivisions. For example, a WFO/RFC may need to make operational changes that cross lines between different groups within the office. The MIC/HIC must champion a good idea and work to get the staff to buy in to the needed changes. It is especially important that each person be evaluated for what they can contribute, not just for historical roles or job classifications.

#### **DEAL WITH CONDUCT AND PERFORMANCE ISSUES IN TIMELY MANNER**



Consult with specialists at your servicing Administrative Support Center and your Deputy RD before taking adverse actions.

### **DO YOUR BEST TO KEEP UP WITH THE SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY**

Your staff will appreciate it if you understand the latest science and technology, and lead by example rather than by directing others to do what you are unable to do.

### **DON'T SOLVE EVERY PROBLEM AN EMPLOYEE PUTS IN FRONT OF YOU**

Decide at what level the problem should be solved. Make sure that the necessary tools needed to solve the problem are available. If you decide to solve the problem, work with the person that presented the problem so that they can learn problem solving techniques and have an investment in the solution.

### **LEARN TO LISTEN**

Do you really hear what your employees are saying to you concerning operational and logistical issues? Let them speak without interruption. Ask questions that show you understand what they've told you. If you don't listen to them, chances are they won't listen to you.

### **ENCOURAGE EMPLOYEES TO SHARE THEIR KNOWLEDGE**

Recommend they present workshops or seminars to share their knowledge with other staff members, with surrounding offices, or with customers.

### **LEARN FROM YOUR STAFF**

You never grow too old to learn. However, as many of us "mature", there is a tendency to feel that we have seen it all and know all that is necessary. We must guard against this. As leaders, we have experience in conveying new methods of doing business to our staffs. We need to keep our eyes open and welcome training and guidance from our staffs. For example, most younger staff members are well versed in uses and capabilities of new technologies. We need to remain open to these learning opportunities as they will strengthen our abilities to be well rounded and knowledgeable leaders.

### **ENCOURAGE CREATIVITY**

The only constant in life is change. With today's rapidly changing technical world, there will always be opportunities to improve approaches to tasks. Encourage your staff to always look for better ways to approach tasks. Allow them the freedom to explore creative methods to approach tasks and allow mistakes to be made, if lessons are learned from those mistakes. This will lead to constantly improving methods of operating. Encourage creative thinking. Avoid being the voice of judgement when people are brainstorming solutions to a problem. Accept ideas but do not comment on them. Advocate brainstorming and consensus building. Allow all ideas to flow. Facilitate discussion, if necessary. Act on ideas of subordinate staff. This stimulates future participation. Put people in charge of their suggestions, if the suggestions are ultimately accepted. They now have a stake in the success of the effort. Promote innovation. Encourage ideas which may be contrary to your own. Some of the best solutions come out of the biggest disagreements.

## **FOSTER GOOD MORALE**

Understand people and their different styles of motivation. Treat people as unique individuals, rather than trying to force them into boxes. A leader must be friendly enough to get to know the unique personalities of the people that he or she leads, to understand how he or she can best lead them.

## **INTERACTIVELY SET GOALS**

It is an extremely powerful idea to work as a group with your staff to set goals. Let them know the corporate goals and general directions from the operating plan, and then work with them to determine local goals and milestones to accomplish them. Work for consensus, and then you have the staff buying into goals, and not feeling that all goals are imposed from above.

## **SHOW THE POSITIVE RESULTS OF CHANGE TO THE STAFF**

Share positive feedback with the staff.

## **BE OPEN TO AND ENCOURAGE SUGGESTIONS FROM THE STAFF**

A strong leader will actively seek suggestions from the staff, empower staff to carry out those suggestions, and give them credit for the accomplishments. A potential wealth of new ideas can be waiting in the mind of your staff. You can find creative solutions to existing challenges, and new and more efficient ways of doing business through encouraging your staff to make suggestions. The person with the suggestion should be directed to the appropriate office focal point or team to explain and “sell” the suggestion.

## **RUMOR CONTROL**

You may not be aware of the rumors that are flying around your office. Take some time at a staff meeting and ask them to tell you what rumors they are hearing. Then provide as much true information (not speculation) as you can to clear up the rumors. The staff feels more included, and they aren't wasting energy being troubled about false items that aren't going to happen. You may be surprised at some of the things that people are worried about!

## **ORGANIZE AD HOC TEAMS TO ADDRESS OPERATIONAL ISSUES**

Allow them to suggest new methods to perform. Assure that the teams include a cross section of abilities to promote shared learning experiences.

## **SHARE CREDIT**

It is very important to share the credit for accomplishments, even to finding creative ways to publicly recognize accomplishments. If your staff members are recognized for achievements, you share in the credit, but if only you are recognized, the staff will not necessarily feel that they share in that recognition.

## **UNDERSTAND WHAT MOTIVATES YOUR STAFF**

For some it may be cash awards, for others it may be public recognition or time off. Some

people excel when given the opportunity to manage a program. Involve your staff when assigning focal points. Encourage further development and leadership skills by assigning special projects to top performers.

## **OBTAIN FEEDBACK**

To really understand what is happening in your office, you need to get feedback from the staff on how they see the office functioning. They will need to be confident that you will receive the information, and not retaliate for negative feedback. However, do not assume that all the feedback will be negative. Positive feedback from your staff is very powerful. Feedback can also include suggestions on other ways to accomplish goals, other team combinations, etc.

## **BE A GOOD PROVIDER**

Provide your staff with the tools and resources to properly do their job. Be properly creative with your office budget. Establish spending priorities in consultation with your management team with an eye toward what is needed most to successfully accomplish the mission. If you keep your local management team in the loop on budget issues they will learn to appreciate your budget constraints and work more effectively with you in prioritizing expenses.

## **MENTOR STAFF**

Mentoring your staff is recognizing leadership abilities among them, and finding ways to further their experience and training in that area. Dave Schmidt, a management consultant and president of Management Development Associates, said "You make the most of your potential by 'growing' those who can deliver results for you. Including others in the entire management process allows you to gain more creative solutions to challenges, implement changes more successfully, and accomplish many things without actually doing them yourself." A clear offshoot of mentoring members of your staff is that your staff will then begin to mentor others in the group so that the whole group may grow and prosper.

## **CREATE A MENTORING ENVIRONMENT**

During the fast paced changes in NWS technology, it's essential that we frequently learn, retool, then learn again. A learning environment not only means formal training administered by the SOO, DOH, or other leaders, but also sharing ideas and learning from co-workers. People are usually eager to share what they know.

## **ARRANGE WORK SCHEDULES**

Pair a person needing training with a more experienced employee.

## **PERMIT LEARNING FROM FAILURE**

Be willing to take personal risks for the organization's sake. Encourage risk and permit failure as long as someone learns from failure. If a person cannot fail then they cannot learn. Not making mistakes is a product of experience, and experience is a product of making mistakes.

### **FOSTER CLIMATE OF INCLUSIVENESS AND RESPECT**

Inspire teamwork, because a leader cannot lead alone. Accomplish goals with people, not thru people. Encourage teamwork by giving timely performance feedback, creating warm relations, staff development, and team motivation. Partner with others. Share agenda, risk, and authority.

### **REWARD STAFF FOR EMBRACING CHANGE**

Recognize personal achievements.

### **INSPIRE FOLLOWERS**

Be genuinely enthusiastic about your operational goals to fulfill the NWS vision and serve your customers. To set an example, tackle your own responsibilities and tasks, with vigor, enthusiasm, and dedication.